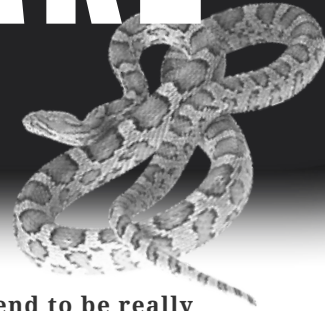




# CORN SNAKE

## Care Guide



### ENCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

Enclosures should be more focused on ground space than total cubic feet. Often 20L-30 gallon enclosures will work just fine for the life of the snake. Corn Snakes don't care how tall the space is, and while they spend most of their time on the ground, they will explore higher into their enclosure on decorations. Make sure they have enough space to spread out. Have at least one decent sized hiding spot, and plenty of cover. They also need access to fresh water. They can be sneaky! Make sure the lid and/or doors are secure.

### TEMPERATURE

Corn snakes want it warm, not hot. This can be accomplished by over tank heaters (like ceramic heat emitters or non-white lights) or under tank heat pads installed on the OUTSIDE of the tank. Make sure the snake can't touch a heater directly, or burns can happen. Aim for about 85°F, but some variation is fine. The heat needs to be on at all times, so white lights are not a good idea.

### HUMIDITY

Corn snakes don't need to be overly wet and humid, but can dry out without access to water. The best way to monitor them is to watch their shed. If it comes off like a sock, that's perfect. If it comes off in flakey chunks, it's too dry. Don't allow for standing water or soaked and moldy substrate. If it is too wet, it can lead to a respiratory infection. Coconut Coir or aspen shaving substrate is great for holding humidity around 40-50%. Don't use cedar or pine shavings!

### BEHAVIOR BASICS

Ball pythons are great beginner snakes! They tend to be really interactive, good eaters, and sturdy. They don't get huge, and come in a lot of cool color patterns. As active hunters they can be seen exploring their enclosures often, and enjoy checking out new enrichment items. They appreciate your warmth when held, but don't need daily handling to have a satisfying life. Being good eaters can lead to accidental food strike bites, but they are small enough to not cause any significant injury and can easily be redirected.

### HANDLING

When getting your snake out of its enclosure, don't grab it by the head. Reach around its middle and slowly lift it up. Corn snakes are active movers and will readily explore. Don't set them down and expect them to still be there when you get back! While holding them, they are holding you at the same time. You are their jungle gym. Once they hold on, they tend to get a good grip around things like arms and wrists. They also like going up shirt sleeves. Make sure to keep them warm (no walks outside in the winter) and away from loud noises that may scare them.

### FEEDING

Feeding should happen about every 7-10 days. You can feed younger snakes more frequently, but adults and seniors do not need to be fed as often. Unless told otherwise, your adopted snake will be eating frozen rodents that you will need to thaw. Put the rodent in warm water until it is thawed, then into a feeding container. This can be a Rubbermaid type tote or secure box. Then put the snake in the box with it. This prevents the snake from associating hands going into its enclosure as feeding time. No one likes getting bit on accident because their snake was hungry! Food should be about as wide around as the snake is around. Bigger is not better, when in doubt, feed a second item of a smaller size. Don't be surprised if your snake goes off its feed occasionally, especially right before they shed. Don't panic! They should start eating again shortly.

### HEALTH CONCERNS

Corn Snakes are pretty healthy. Make sure when they shed that they also loose the scale that goes over their eyes. If it didn't come off with the rest of their shed, soak them in some warm water. If they spend a lot of time in their water dish, check for mites. If they leave their mouth gapping open a lot, have wheezy breathing, or nasal discharge, they may have a respiratory infection, and should see a vet.